



Danielle Walker's Against All Grain Celebrations: A Year of Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, and Paleo Recipes for Every Occasion

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From the two-time *New York Times* best-selling author of the *Against All Grain* series, comes 125 recipes for grain-free, dairy-free, gluten-free comfort food recipes for holidays and special occasions.

When people adopt a new diet for health or personal reasons, it's the parties, holidays, and events with strong food traditions they worry about most. In *Celebrations*, best-selling author Danielle Walker provides recipes and menus for twelve special occasions, from a child's birthday party and baby shower, to a backyard barbecue, romantic Valentine's Day dinner for two, and even a Halloween party. Of course, Thanksgiving, Christmas dinner, New Year's Eve party, and Easter/Passover brunch are also covered--along with suggestions for beverages and cocktails and the all-important desserts. Nearly every recipe is photographed, and food and party images shot on location provide beautiful and creative entertaining ideas. Delicious and easy-to-prepare dishes encourage the whole family to get into the kitchen and create lasting memories--no matter what the occasion.

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From Reader Review Danielle Walker's Against All Grain Celebrations: A Year of Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, and Paleo Recipes for Every Occasion for online ebook

Mandy says

I tried five recipes out of this book before giving up. Even with following the directions to a T, none of them turned out like the photo. And I'm not a beginner in the kitchen. Lol. For whatever reason this book and I were not a good fit. I'm sure other people will enjoy it, but it didn't work for me and my family.

Lili says

I received this book as an advance reader copy from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

I was very excited to be approved for this book because I throw dinner parties at least once a month, and I need to expand my repertoire to accommodate a variety of dietary concerns. My best friend recently told me that she has been eating vegan for health reasons since the beginning of the year, and that the only time that she breaks her regimen is at my dinner parties. Her sister, who is also a frequent guest at my dinner parties, is both lactose and gluten intolerant. So my old ways of making a giant lasagna or baked ziti, a pot of homemade gravy, and a variety of meats for Saturday night dinner have got to change.

Against All Grains Celebrations begins with an introduction that briefly recounts the author's health journey (she refers to her blog and her other books for an in-depth account) that led her to adopt a Paleo diet, which excludes dairy, legumes, grain products, and processed foods. She also explains how to use the recipes in the book, as well as offers grain-free recipe guidelines. Having now baked three or four gluten free cakes, it was helpful to read these guidelines in order to feel comfortable in branching out to other baked goods. And the "Top Ten Tips for Effortless Entertaining" validated what my friends consider to be my odd quirks – like setting and decorating the table a few days in advance, and having all the serving dishes and utensils designated and ready to go before I've started cooking. Of course, I can hear my friends saying "We told you so" to her suggestion that you accept help – even if it is just picking up ice or providing beverages.

The seven pages of an ingredient glossary and substitutions provided a lot of useful information. Ingredients were listed in alphabetical order, and for each ingredient there was a short description of what it is made from, how it is made and what it is used for. Next listed were any substitutions, if possible, and then the preferred brands and sources for the ingredient. Although many of the recommended sources were specialty brands or online retailers, several of the products were available at Costco, Whole Foods and Trader Joe's. This section was very informative for me, as my gluten free baking experience as previously just consisted of following a recipe without knowing what the different purposes of the different flours were. Reading this section has definitely banished any lingering temptation I may have to simplify that recipe.

Three pages were enough to provide a comprehensive list of essential kitchen equipment, especially since there was a reference to her website for more information about favorite brands. I will admit that I do not own everything on the list – particularly a loaf pan and a full-sized food processor – but I feel that I have checked enough boxes to consider my kitchen well stocked.

After the preliminary material, the twelve chapters are organized by holiday meal in chronological order. Included are not only the main holidays – Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving – but also smaller holidays – New Year’s Eve, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Fourth of July, Halloween – and special events – game days, birthday parties, and showers. Valentine’s Day, Halloween and Christmas have multiple menus. Each chapter begins with a personal introduction and an overview of the menu for that chapter. Most of the menus include desserts, and some of the menus include cocktails. The menus are usually designed to serve between eight to twelve adults, but the actual number will be specified in the chapter introduction.

Each recipe begins with an introduction that ties it into the holiday or event, and gives some tips for preparation or serving. The number served is clearly annotated to the left, right above the list of ingredients. Appetizer portions seem generous, at about four pieces per person. Ingredients are helpfully listed in the order of use in the recipe. The majority of the specialty ingredients were previously discussed in the ingredient glossary, so the ones that should seem odd (like coconut aminos for example) don’t seem all that unfamiliar. The recipe steps range from somewhat lengthy blocks of text to short two sentence paragraphs. After the recipe, generally follow “Make It Ahead” and “Tidbits” sections. The “Make It Ahead” section provides directions on how to prepare the recipe in advance and reheat it for the event. It seems like almost every recipe in the book could be partially or completely made ahead to ease hostess stress on the day of the celebration. The “Tidbits” section provides advice specific to the recipe, such as what type of apples to select for the Apple Parsnip Soup Shooters, as well as generic cooking techniques, such as how to blend hot liquids in a blender. This section also sometimes includes modifications or additions to recipes if dairy can be tolerated.

The recipe selection is very diverse. Each menu is at least three courses – starter, soup, or salad; main course; dessert – although most include vegetables, starches and drinks as well. The birthday party section alone has six different cake recipes and six different frosting recipes, some of which are also nut-free. The Thanksgiving section has three different holiday appropriate pies. And the Christmas section has at least five different types of cookies, plus recipes for panettone, a gingerbread house, fudge, and homemade marshmallows. Cocktails throughout the book include a holiday gimlet, ginger peach sangria, margaritas, and a spiced apple hot toddy. Who knew that tequila was gluten free, as long as it is 100% agave?

Following the menus are approximately ten pages of basic recipes. These are arranged in alphabetical order for ease of reference, and range from almond milk to whipped cream. Essentially these recipes are for basic ingredients and condiments that are Paleo compliant, such as grain free baking powder, barbecue sauce, ketchup and mayonnaise. Each recipe follows the format of the recipes in the main body of the book, including Make It Ahead and Tidbits sections afterward. The only difference is that there are no photographs in these ten pages.

I found it very useful that the author included a conversion chart in her book. This seems like a little thing, but it is one less thing that I have to Google during my preparation to cook. I also found it very useful that the author included a Recipe Index, which grouped the recipe according to type – breakfast, starters, soups, salads, sides, mains, desserts, beverages, basic. Although this index did not include page numbers for the recipes, it did facilitate menu planning by giving you all the options at once. (The galley that I received did not include the full index, so I can’t comment on how easy it would be to find the desired recipe in the actual index.) The Special Diets Index is pretty awesome. It provides at a glance which recipes are Egg Free, Nut Free, Nightshade Free, and Specific Carbohydrate Diet. It is organized according to the menu in each chapter rather than alphabetically, so you do need to know which chapter your recipe came from. Again, there are no page numbers, so you would need to consult the actual index to find the recipe in the book.

The photography predominantly is stylized photos of finished recipes, photos of people enjoying the food,

and stills of settings, such as place settings, bar set ups, and flower arrangements. Overall, the photographs are lovely complements to the text.

I highly recommended this book to my father, who is a well-established pediatrician in a local private practice. When he first learned of my NetGalley hobby, he explained to me that there are a large number of kids suffering from celiac disease in his practice, so he is always on the look out for books to add to the practice's gluten free library. It brought me joy to be able to recommend this book to him, and to know that this recommendation might enable some of his patients to celebrate a birthday party with cake, pizza, and finger foods, as well as to enjoy the traditional holidays with their families.

Overall, I would highly recommend this book. The recipes are straightforward and easy to follow. Thanks to the ingredient glossary with its detailed sourcing information and the extensive basic recipes section, the "exotic" ingredients required by the recipes are much less intimidating than they otherwise may have been. It definitely satisfied my quest for ideas to serve my vegan friend and her gluten/lactose intolerant sister at my dinner parties. Thanks to this book, I could even host a Gingerbread House making competition at Christmastime!

I have yet to test any recipes from this book. When I do, I will update my review.

UPDATE #1: My vegan friend and her gluten/lactose intolerant sister invited me to a Stir Fry Dinner Party over the weekend, so I volunteered to bring an appropriate dessert, knowing that would give me an opportunity to test a recipe from this book. Since yesterday was National Chocolate Day and I still had chocolate on the brain, I chose to prepare the Christmas Fudge recipe. Of course, the only required ingredients I had in the house were the vanilla extract and the salt, so I had to make a special trip to the grocery store to acquire them. The recipe came together very quickly and easily – almost as easily as the standard marshmallow fluff recipe! I was a bit disappointed that the finished product was grainy rather than smooth, but that was just a matter of aesthetics. My friend, her sister, and the other guests at the dinner party thought that the fudge was very good, and everyone made sure to take some home with them. Specifically, one guest appreciated that the fudge was not cloyingly sweet and had a nice strong taste of chocolate to it. They definitely recommended that I keep the recipe to make again for them in the future.

I wasn't as pleased with the results of my test of the Lavender Lemonade recipe as written. I was thrilled to find super cheap culinary lavender at Marshalls (I bought both jars!) because I love the smell of it. But the Lavender Lemonade tasted of tart lemon, despite only using one cup of lemon juice to six cups of water. It could be because I used bottled lemon juice instead of fresh squeezed lemon juice. Or it could be that the proportions that I'm used to are one part simple syrup, one part water, and one part lemon juice. This recipe was twelve parts water to two parts lemon juice to one part honey. Somewhere between the two lie the perfect lavender lemonade proportions. I'm not above experimenting to find them. I've got the lavender to do it!

UPDATE #2: In mid-January 2017, my friends and I held a Gingerbread House Construction Party using the paleo gingerbread recipe and royal icing recipe from this book. I was really pleased at how easily the gingerbread dough came together once I had all the ingredients for it. I made three batches of dough, which was enough to build four houses from a pattern that my friend drafted and several trees from the pattern on the Against All Grains website. The royal icing recipe was a definite winner. It held the house pieces together very solidly and set very quickly. By the time the last of the four of us had built the base of the house, the first person's base was set enough to put on the roof! Two of my friends reported to me the day after the Gingerbread House Construction Party that they had started eating their houses, and that they were delicious. So those two recipes are definite keepers! The full report on the Gingerbread House Construction

Party is on my blog.

Des says

I like Danielle Walker, she is charming and funny - and completely raw and real for lack of a better term.

Celebrations was a bit much for me, it could be that through the time I was reading it and attempting to try recipes I was battling autoimmune disease as well. I found it really hard to find some ingredients, and the ones that I wished to use were too expensive with other products I needed. It simply became unaffordable but I realized this was a book for special occasions not everyday cooking.

Danielle is wonderful, her recipes are clear and delicious. So if you can really focus, and choose a few good pieces from this book I'd recommend trying some.

Stephanie says

Fantastic recipes

Every recipe I've tried so far is delicious and easy, my friends can't believe they are grain-free and ask for me to make some of their favorites too.

Brittany says

Another fantastic book from Danielle Walker. Her cookbooks are among my top favorites and I cook with them regularly. This book is so beautiful and the recipes make me so happy as I'm able to incorporate many of my favorite seasonal/holiday foods back into those special days that I have had to alter since going paleo for health reasons. I also use these recipes for everyday cooking too. Highly recommend!

Lisa Suit says

Danielle Walker has hit it out of the park with this one! I own and love her other cookbooks, but this one is already my new favorite! One of the hardest parts of switching to a Paleo diet (especially if the rest of your extended family still eats a regular diet) is the holidays. You miss out on so many of your favorite foods, and some family members just won't understand why you "can't cheat on your diet just this once". That will no longer be a problem with this book in your arsenal! With a variety of traditional foods and classics with a twist, Mrs. Walker covers New Year's Eve, Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, the 4th of July, a summer shower, birthday parties, Halloween, an Autumn party, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and cooking basics. The recipes run the spectrum from kid friendly food (like heart shaped pancakes on a skewer and Mummy Dogs) to a sophisticated roast, branzino, festive cocktails, and everything in between! I highly recommend this cookbook; even if you don't follow a Paleo diet you will find recipes that you will love and want to make!

I received an Advance Reader Copy from NetGalley in exchange for my honest review, which I have given.

Terri says

Being Gluten Free I always am looking for new cookbooks for new recipes. Although I am vegetarian there are plenty of recipes in here for me to enjoy. Straightforward and easy to prepare this is a keeper

Reading.Between.Wines says

Another great cookbook I have no interest in using *sigh*. I didn't realize that the format for this cookbook was occasions even though it says it right on the cover.

Tiffany says

I inhaled this in one sitting and it was the first time I really thought, "Wow I can do this. This can be my life." And it was the first time I wasn't overwhelmed or panicked by the prospect of changing my entire food life. Thoughtful recipes, approachable steps and lots of tips to get you planning ahead. A+

Alasandra Alawine says

Lovely layout with menus and directions for creating a great party full of healthy fair. Eating good doesn't have to be boring.

Paula says

Oh my god!!!! I promise to change my rating to 5+ stars if her recipe for Panettone works for me. Having been gluten-free for 13 years, Christmas makes me miss panettone the most. I am so very excited to try this recipe!!!

In other news, her pumpkin spice latte is so delicious that my pet rats drank some of it out of my mug. And, yes, rat-lovers, I have video of them doing it.

Jessica says

Celebrations is a beautiful cookbook and a beautiful book in general. Once again Danielle Walker hits it out of the park when she makes eating and cooking grain free for a family feel accessible and doable by anyone. With appealing photographs and down to earth attainable recipes, Celebrations makes me want to cook all of these dishes for all of my events. Her gentle and encouraging style makes me feel capable instead of defeated

as many cookbooks do.

She also made me laugh when she offers this advice "set the table a few days in advance," ha ha In my big and bustling family, everything would be lost if I try to do that.

Nelleke Plouffe says

I've been thinking about trying a healing diet for my son, who has an autoimmune condition. I'm still in the research phase, and haven't actually tried any of these recipes. I still rate this Cookbook highly for being approachable and beautiful, and for taking away some of the intimidation I feel when contemplating completely changing my cooking habits.

Punk says

Starts off with a menu for a New Year's Eve cocktail party and ends with one for Christmas Day, hitting up the Super Bowl, Mother's Day and Father's Day, Birthdays, and every major secular or Christian U.S. holiday in between.

Because these are menus, the book isn't easy to flip through if you're looking for a certain item, but there's an index sorted by soup, salad, dessert, etc, and then there's a special diet index that indicates whether a recipe is egg-free, nut-free, nightshade-free, and/or SCD/GAPS appropriate—no page number for the actual recipes, though—then, finally, the full index, which is very thorough.

Also because this is for celebrating, the dishes tend toward the higher end of the fancy & impressive scale. Like if you want to celebrate dragging yourself out of bed with a muffin, your only choice is something called a "mini 'corn' dog muffin." I'm only looking at the index right now, so I don't know what that means, but those scare quotes are scaring me.

Since I'm mostly focused on feeding myself these days, this isn't going to be much use to me. But each recipe does have a gorgeous color photo, head notes, instructions on how to make things ahead and storage advice. Measurements are in U.S. volume.

Baking ingredients include coconut oil, palm shortening, and sometimes ghee; eggs; 100% unsweetened cocoa and chocolate bars, cacao butter; coconut sugar, honey, maple syrup & sugar; arrowroot powder, coconut flour, almond flour & meal, cashew flour, sunflower flour, flax seeds, chia seeds; coconut milk, nut milks; gelatin; sunflower seed butter. No gums.

On a personal note, Danielle Walker seems to wear a lot of white, even while she's serving someone a plate of spaghetti with red sauce. I mean, that is not a low-maintenance choice. How can I trust this woman to be making good decisions when it comes to cooking? HOLY SHIT YOU GUYS. I'm paging through this while typing, and here we go, baked "beans" where instead of legumes (avoided by some paleo folks) she uses pine nuts. A POUND OF PINE NUTS. That's around 30 bucks for baked "beans." That's it, I'm out.

Ira says

Danielle Walker's Against All Grain Celebrations ist ein wunderbares Buch, dessen Rezepte weitgehend auf der Paleo-Ernährung basieren und glutenfrei und milchfrei gehalten sind. Ich kann mich zwar noch nicht ganz mit einer komplett getreidefreien Ernährung anfreunden, da ich schlichtweg eine Schwäche für Brot und Backwaren habe und mich aufgrund vielfältiger anderer Ernährungseinschränkungen etwas schwer damit tun tue, komplett auf Getreide zu verzichten, aber ich versuche dennoch meine Ernährung insgesamt zu verändern, da ich weiß, dass es aus gesundheitlichen Gründen für mich tatsächlich besser wäre.

Aus diesem Grund, habe ich mir auch Danielle Walker's Against All Grain Celebrations Kochbuch einmal näher angeguckt, da es genau an dem Punkt ansetzt, den ich auch immer recht schwierig finde: Die Feiertage.

Jede Ernährungsweise, die von der Norm abweicht, ist im Alltag manchmal lästig, manchmal schwierig umzusetzen, aber immer irgendwie doch machbar, lediglich an den Feiertagen jedweder Art, fehlt irgendwie doch immer etwas, wenn man auf die traditionellen Gerichte verzichten muss .

Hier setzt Danielle Walkers neuestes Buch an. Dieses Buch bietet nicht nur für Neulinge der etreidefreien Ernährung eine gute Orientierung und eine gute Einleitung, sondern auch sehr schöne, den traditionellen Gerichten nachempfundene Rezepte, die die gut aufbereitet und leicht nachzukochen sind und den, sagen wir mal "Zauber" der traditionellen Gerichte einfangen. Für diejenigen, die nicht nur getreidefrei essen möchten, sondern darüber hinaus auch noch auf weitere Faktoren Rücksicht nehmen müssen oder wollen, wie etwa die Einschränkungen, die durch irgendwelche chronischen Erkrankungen oder Lebensmittelunverträglichkeiten entstehen, gibt es immer wieder Hinweise, welche Komponenten man durch andere ersetzen kann und wie, ebenso wie es für ungeübte Köche diverse Hilfen gibt, die über das reine Kochen hinaus gehen, um gerade auch Festtagsessen zu einem besonderen Erlebnis werden zu lassen .

Von Tipps zum richtigen Ein- oder Vorratskauf, bis zum hübschen Decken des Tisches und der richtigen Musikauswahl , findet man hier alles, was man benötigt, um möglichst stressfrei und kompetent an die Vorbereitung eines festlichen Essen heranzugehen .

Die übersichtlich gestalteten Rezepte, mit einfachen, leicht nachzuvollziehenden Anweisungen und vielen hilfreichen Tipps, die von sehr schönen, ausgesprochen appetitanregenden Fotos begleitet werden, sind, soweit ich sie bis jetzt probiert habe, schmackhaft und gut umzusetzen. Durch die Bank weg, machen alle Gerichte auf mich einen sehr guten Eindruck und ich freue mich darauf, noch weitere ausprobieren zu können .

Wie man generell zur Paleo-Ernährung oder einer getreidefreien Ernährung steht, muss jeder für sich selbst entscheiden, wie gesagt, auch ich tue mich mit einem radikalen, vollständigen Wechsel zu dieser Ernährungsweise noch schwer, aber aus eigener Erfahrung kann ich sagen, dass man mit Hilfe der richtigen Ernährung bei vielen Erkrankungen, insbesondere auch chronischer Art, deutliche Linderung erzielen kann.

Egal wie, kann ich dieses Buch auf jeden Fall auf Grund der praxisorientierten, umfassenden Rezepte und Arbeitsanweisung , sowie der liebevollen Gestaltung voll und ganz empfehlen.
